

THE IMPENDING CRISIS—THE IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT BETWEEN FREEDOM AND SLAVERY.

SPEECH

OF

HON. ALFRED WELLS, OF NEW YORK.

Delivered in the U. S. House of Representatives, April 6, 1860.

A question of incalculable moment is now before the American people for their decision—one which the American people only can decide. Not to Congress, not to courts, not to legislative assemblies or judicial tribunals in the States, but to the people, only, belongs the final decision of this question; a question fraught with the most momentous consequences, not only to themselves and their posterity, but to the race. Of what vast importance is it that the tribunal which is to decide this question should discharge its high trust so as to advance the interests of humanity, by establishing its decision upon those principles of truth and justice which are the foundation of God's throne, and which alone can keep his footstool from destruction. Before the people clothe themselves with the judicial power, and decide what may be irreversible, save by the fiat of the Father and Judge of all, each individual should strive to fit himself for the right discharge of his high function. He should ask that his affections may be purified and his intellect enlightened; that he may be able to rise above all selfish motives, and, unbiassed by all disturbing influences, may act under the dictates of conscience and the inspirations of the Father. He should pray that prejudice and passion may not be suffered to cloud his reason, and that the Divine radiance from the Sun of Intelligence may illuminate his understanding. Then, with pure hauds, an unclouded intellect, and affections radiant with love to God and man, each citizen, clothed with the judicial ermine, may fearlessly enter upon the discharge of his high trust.

Now, here, on the threshold of my argument, I bow my soul in humility before the throne of Eternal Justice, and pray for the wisdom, the

love, and the energy, which shall enable me to advocate, as I ought, the cause of man before the august tribunal of the people—august, because the people are images of God, and, clothed with sovereignty by Him, their high function is to exercise justice and judgment upon the acts of their servants who make, execute, and decide the laws.

Of infinite importance is it, that the source of power, the spring that feeds the stream, should be pure as the crystal. For if the fountain is turbid at its source, it will carry with it, in solution, the impurities of the fen and the morass from which it issues. Only as from a virtuous people, from the mountains of an elevated spiritual state in the individual man, roll the springs of power, through towns, and counties, and States, to this Capitol, will be found concentrated here an ocean of power, whose winds and waves even will but purify its depths; whose expanded surface shall not only bear the wealth of nations, but, under the beam of a Sun of Righteousness, shall send up the cloud and the mist, which, wafted to the remotest rim of its mighty realm, shall descend upon the humblest and the highest, in the dew and rain of equal and just laws, replenishing the fountains of its power, making their flow perennial, and our Union perpetual.

Law, in its application to man, is a rule of conduct commanding what is right and prohibiting what is wrong. Obedience to law, as thus defined, is an essential element of all well-being. No man, no society, no nation, no world, can revolve, in its appropriate sphere, without obedience to law. All law is the will expressed of God or man. The source of law is indirectly God; the Creator of the universe must be its preserver, in its parts as well as in the mighty

whole; and whether by direct power and omniscience, He holds suns in their spheres or planets in their orbits, nations in their fates or individuals in their destinies, or whether He acts through instrumentalities of matter or of mild, the Divine is, indirectly, in all law, and is the all of law. However remote the stream of law from its source, its connection is continuous and eternal. His WILL, whether expressed in his word or written on his works, is immutable, and embraces within its range the worlds of matter and of mind.

Unless man is self-created and self-existent, he must himself be subject to the will of his Creator; and the laws man makes by permission must accord with the law of God, must derive their sanction from their agreement with and subordination to the laws of God. If they war against His attributes of JUSTICE and MERCY, they cannot bind the CONSCIENCE, however they may compel the ACT. Once clearly establish that a human law is in direct and palpable opposition to the divine, and its force, its sanction as law, is gone. It has ceased to be the will of God, and is no longer the voice of the people. It may be the voice of a tyrant or a fiend. Whether it be a British stamp act, or ship-money act, whether the act of a King or of a British Parliament clothed with the highest authority on earth, a decision of a Jeffreys, soiling the ermine of the bench, or the proclamation that Nebuchadnezzar made on the plain of Dura, or the decree of Darius, which, like the law of the Medes and Persians, altereth not, the teaching of Holy Writ, and of the fathers of the Revolution, instruct us that resistance to tyrants is obedience to God. And it is better to bleed as our fathers, suffer as Hampden, walk through the fiery furnace with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, or be cast into the lion's den with Daniel, than to give the sanction of human law to crimes against God and man.

The momentous question for the people to decide is: Whether our nation, under the form of law, is to sink into a realm of despots and slaves, or to rise into a glorious republic of freemen? Whether sterility and death shall finally spread a pall over the land, or fertility and life make it jubilant with joy? Whether the savannas of the sunny South, and the green hills and valleys of the North, shall ultimately be tilled by the swart descendants of Africans or by our own Anglo-Saxons? Whether they shall resound to the crack of the overseer's lash, or echo with the cheerful sounds of free labor? Whether the wide plantation, with its princely mansion and circle of huts, shall dot the surface of our western prairies, and education languish, religion perish, art decay, or whether along our jocund streams shall rise the cottager's humble dwelling, garnished with the woodbine and the rose; over whose happy threshold the free boy, with his merry laugh, bounds, with satchel in hand, at the tinkle of

the school bell; around whose cheerful winter hearth, while the winds whistle and the snow descends without, gathers the sacred circle of home; the decent matron, careful of her children's hearts, and minds, and bodies; the sturdy man, rough, but contented with the toils of life, glancing with proud eye upon the simple comforts that surround the casket of jewels that he calls his own, and watching with jealous care and manly pride the gradual unfoldings of those germs of mind into the graces of a genuine manhood and priceless womanhood; knowing that no rude hand will sever the golden chain of love that binds his willing heart to the sharer of his life-long joys and sorrows; sure that the nurselings of his care, around whose hearts are twined the fibres of his own, will not be torn rudely from his embrace; sure that the daughter of his heart will on the morrow meet him with glad eye and joyful lip; sure that the boy whom he expects to support his steps, as they grow feeble with age, will, at the appointed time, take his place, and supply his vacant chair; confident that the circle of home, knit together by the holy ties of affection on earth, consecrated to works of use to the neighbor below, will be gathered again into a holier and happier circle on high, to dwell forever in God's wider realm of active rest and nobler kingdom of use above—the perfected fruit of obedience to the laws of God, which ripens best where the sun of Liberty shines upon man and society with unclouded ray, and gives free scope, under the influence of free institutions, to the unshackled faculties of body, mind, and heart, to unfold into perfection?

Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty; not vigilance in Congress or in courts—not in Kings or Presidents—not in lords or aristocracies—but in the people. Power, in its very nature, is cumulative and aggressive. The principle of attraction applies to all recipients of power, as well as to the globes of space. The larger body draws to itself the smaller; the aggregated mass the scattered particles; and nothing but the centrifugal will overcome or neutralize the centripetal force. Action, activity, ceaseless activity, eternal vigilance, is the preservative of all things. No receptacle of the delegated powers which inhere only in the individual man is free from this attractive influence. A knowledge of this tendency made our fathers make this Government one of checks and balances. For this purpose, making the grants of power as limited as possible; separating, by as distinct lines as practicable, the great body of power remaining in the people from that imparted to the States, or delegated to the Federal Government. In the Federal Government, separating and defining the functions of its various departments, thereby making the abuse or assumption of power more easy of detection, and enhancing the responsibility of the public servant; sedulously providing against the absorptive influence of power

by the Government, by leaving the great bulk of individual freedom and sovereignty undelimited in the people, and by providing for the resumption, through peaceful methods, of any power delegated which the people might deem injurious to their rights; by short terms of office and frequent elections, keeping alive that active interest in governmental affairs amongst the people, upon the constant exercise of which the safety of the whole depends; lastly, by affording the amplest protection which the most sacred guaranties could afford to the absolute and unalienable rights of the citizen. The President, as Executive, was to have no legislative, no judicial power, but his qualified veto was a check on hasty or unconstitutional legislation. The Senate, as a co-ordinate branch, in its right to make treaties and confirm nominations to office, was to be a check upon the Executive functions; in its power to try impeachments, a limitation of and check upon the judicial; in its authority to originate and to adopt, or reject or amend laws, a check on the representative branch. Whilst the House of Representatives, coming directly from the people, and nearest to them in feeling, was intrusted with the power to raise revenue, to hold the purse of the nation; with the power to impeach all the officers of the Government for official crimes; and, together with the Senate, the sole power to declare war, and to pass all laws within the limits of the Constitution. Independent of both the executive and legislative branches; selected for their great learning, for their pure and spotless characters; lifted above the corruptions of the other branches of Government; freed by the tenure of their office, and by their pursuits as jurists, from all motives of earthly ambition likely to conflict with the faithful discharge of their duties; with no responsibility but to God and their own consciences—to the Supreme Court of the Union was intrusted, as to the Cherubim of old, the flaming sword of *Justice*, "which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Above all, and over all, the purifier of them all, the check on all, the source of all the powers of the Government, with Argus eyes, the sovereign *People*, with eternal vigilance as their motto, watch the movements of the mighty mechanism of their hands, ready at the needed moment to correct, through the sovereign energy of their potent will, the first encroachment of any part upon the appropriate functions of another.

This Government of ours, thus constructed, thus guarded, is a mighty instrument of progress. But as it moves along the shining years, freighted with the hopes of humanity, the ceaseless, the fearless, the virtuous vigilance of the People, can alone make its movements safe, can alone repress and confine its elements of power within their appropriate limits, and keep Government and people from being plunged into the gulf of despotism, down which the

stateliest Commonwealths have toppled into shattered fragments.

"The end of Government is to perfect
The human spirit."

The laws which should govern the individual man should steadily have this object in view—the perfection of the human spirit. All violations of the laws that govern the individual man delay or frustrate this end. The social laws which regulate man's relation to his fellow-man have all the same object. Without subordination to the physical, moral, and religious rules, which are intended to govern man, as an individual and as a social being, there can be no true progress. By the operation of those laws, under the Providence of God, the capacities and powers of the individual gradually unfold and grow into a genuine manhood. Robust and vigorous health attend only upon purity, temperance, and exercise. Cheerfulness of temper, serenity of mind, holiness of affection, and power in execution, consist best, if not only, with the robust and vigorous animal health, which is the fruit of obedience to the laws of our animal nature. A sane mind in a sound body, is a maxim not less true than trite. But health of body is but the base, the foundation of the superstructure. Its sensational capacities are but the golden gates through which stream in upon the intellect images of the world without; the illimitable treasures that are gathered from the mine of the universe; the "wafted odors" that assail the sense of smell; the Hesperian fruits that melt into the joys of taste; the music of the woods;

"The many tones of air, and earth, and sea,
All instruments of melody, that change
Still air to music; yea, the art that gives
To every thought and love its vocal power;"

the glories of nature, the purple flush of morn and eve, the "starry canopy on high," all the blended beauties of art and nature that stream upon the eye, and all the joys of touch that thrill the frame—all this sensational wealth, dagger-cotyped upon the human soul in an image and likeness of the visible universe, with all its vast and complicate phenomena—these stores of wealth, which constitute the rudiments out of which the grand architect which dwells within can build, with endless diversity, stately structures to adorn the slopes of all coming time—these are but the adornments of the vestibule to the temple of the soul; for all these may stand as stony statues in the dome of thought, as lifeless as the marble and as cold. Man may

"Yoke the patient years,
To plow the fallow fields of history
For buried treasures;"
"Gather the ripe fruit of all sciences;"
"Drink deep of the Hesperian spring;"

and yet sink below the level of the beast. Physical power, mental culture, vast attainments in art and science, leave the soul a cold and barren waste, until the Promethean fire descends—until the vitalizing principle of

love penetrates and permeates the dome of thought—not self-love—not love of the world—not love of “the world’s applause, the body’s pleasure,” but the love of the neighbor, the love of God—that love which makes the thorny path of duty more joyous than beds of roses—that love which prompts to works of usefulness—that love which wears the crown of thorns and bears the bloody cross. When such love enters and fills the human soul, the stony statues turn to living flesh; the torpor of death springs into the energy of life; a glorious sunlight fills the thoughts; holy affections sally out in messages of love, and come back from their deeds of mercy, laden like bees with honey. From under the threshold of the dome pours forth the river of life, fertilizing in its course the lands it overflows. The dome of thought is no longer opaque, but like a diamond radiates the beams of the Sun of Righteousness; for then man becomes the Shekinah of the Almighty. Through him streams the Divine wisdom, from him radiates the Divine love, in him lives the Divine power, enlightening, elevating, energizing every faculty of his nature. Then man glows in the image and likeness of his Maker, and the promise is fulfilled.

Such is an imperfect and hasty sketch of that perfection of the Human Spirit, which is the only legitimate aim and end of human government. When the human soul is so perfected, it is a heaven; it may be here on earth; for the kingdom of God is within us; and mental state depends, not so much on the amount of what we know, as on the proper application or use of what we know. Buried knowledge is a sepulchre; and whether it be a single grave or a pyramid, within it is nothing but dust. Slavery is the sepulchre of knowledge thus buried. It is a chain upon the body, a manacle on the mind, an icy fetter round the heart. Growth, normal, healthful growth, is impossible to the slave. As well expect the rosebud, encased in ice, to unfold its petals, as to expect the germs of intellect and affection in a slave to unfold into a genuine manhood or priceless womanhood. From animal indulgence, all the restraining influences, save of fear, are cast aside. Mental culture is stopped in its beginnings, by a sensual, toilsome, and hopeless life. The rudiments, the alphabets of knowledge, are cut off from him. The fires of intelligence are smothered, and in their stead the sombre pall of brutal ignorance and stolid indifference o’er-canopies the soul. Within its firmament shine no luminaries, twinkle no stars. The ample page of God’s works written on the face of nature is dimmed and blurred; and the will of God, revealed in his word, is almost unknown, because the power “to search the Scriptures” is denied. His affectional nature is perverted at its source. Self rules supreme. The fountains of affection are turned in upon himself. The outlets are all blocked

up. He can become an image only of those pestilent pools which receive but never issue forth the springs of the mountain—whose stagnant and slimy wave becomes the home of the reptile, and from whose putrescent surface rise the miasmatic vapors of death. His love cannot go forth, save in adulterous lust to her whose chaste affections should build around him a panoply of power to resist every impure desire. His affections cannot weave themselves into the interests of his offspring, stimulating him to self-sacrificing toils for their temporal good, and to a stainless life, in the paths of duty, as an example to lead them to eternal happiness. His love of country, that ennobling element of moral and mental wealth, has no scope for action. No common interest makes him ready, like Wincleried, to gather the spears of his country’s enemies into his own bosom; no temple of fame lifts its airy dome in the distance, calling forth the dormant energies of his soul, to climb the steep where it shines afar. The toil-worn body—the darkened intellect—the dwarfed and blighted affection—is the lot of the slave. Say not his lot is happy. If his inborn virtues lift him above the beast, it is not because his surroundings have tended to the result.

Man is not man, and heaven, to which he is an heir, cannot be within him, save in the right and free exercise of his faculties of body and of soul. He must be *free*; and Governments are instituted amongst men, that *man* may be *free*. For this end they derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed. They are instituted by men to protect man through men. All the powers of government are imparted by men, all the powers are intrusted to men, and all the functions of government are exercised by men, and are carried on for the protection of *man*; and all government should be under the influence of those principles of liberty, justice, and mercy, which are intended for man. Kings have arrogated the divine right to govern, impiously assuming that their power was descended directly from the Divine, not mediately through man; forgetting that the Almighty has said, “I gave them a King, in my anger,” and that the apostle has declared, “That there is no respect of persons with God;” forgetting that the Father of All has given to all one common nature, has clothed all with the like powers, and has prepared for all who obey His law one common destiny. Classes of men have arrogated to themselves the power and right to govern. In the pride of wealth, class or color assumed to have been lifted above the common level of humanity, and to have been placed by nature or by nature’s God upon a higher plane of existence, and clothed with sovereign attributes; invested with the prerogative to govern, not themselves only, but all whom in their sinful pride they have placed below them.

But the corner-stone of our political Govern-

ments is the *equality* of all men. Kings, aristocracies, classes, are repudiated by the fundamental principles of the Declaration of Independence, and of our National and State Constitutions. The long struggle of the Revolution, the glorious lives sacrificed on the altar of freedom, were to secure the PRINCIPLES of LIBERTY, which the colonists claimed to be the birthright of British subjects under the British Constitution and laws. The rights secured by Magna Charta, and the other great charters of British liberty, were claimed to be the natural and inalienable rights of all men. In their Declaration of Independence, they declared, "that all men are created equal," and endowed by their Creator with the unalienable right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." They repeated this doctrine in their subsequent manifestoes. In one form or another, almost every State Constitution enunciated the same doctrines. They pointed to the works of Sydney and Locke as their text-books, and appealed to the Bible in confirmation of the natural equality and independence of the whole species. The flagrant inconsistency of the system of African slavery existing in the States, with these principles, was a frequent subject of regret, and of painful study, amongst the statesmen and patriots of the revolutionary era. Patrick Henry declared that it was a debt we owe "to the purity of our religion, to show that it is at variance with that law which warrants slavery." It has been admitted, on this floor, that amongst the founders and fathers of the Republic, slavery was considered as morally wrong, and inconsistent with the principles of equality, and the natural and indefeasible right, declared by the Declaration of Independence. Such were the sentiments of Jay, Hamilton, and Franklin, and hosts of Northern men. Such was the almost unanimous voice of all the great men of the South. Eloquent extracts, showing the abhorrence of Southern men to slavery, have been repeatedly published in speeches delivered on this floor. Amongst the warmest opponents of the institution of African slavery, were Washington and Lafayette, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Patrick Henry, Pinkney; and scarcely a single Southern State, but what has borne testimony against the iniquity of African slavery, either in the debates in its legislative halls, by the provisions of its Constitution, or the decisions of its judicial tribunals.

The early abolition of slavery, at the time of the formation of our National Government, was confidently expected. The first steps had already been taken which led to its extinction in over half of the original States. The action of the States prohibiting the slave trade, and the authority to Congress to prohibit it entirely in 1808, the branding the traffic as piracy, were all considered incipient steps in the abolition of slavery. Nothing is more clearly established by the history of the times, than that African slavery was considered a curse, inflicted upon

the American Colonies through the mercenary rapacity of British merchants, sanctioned by the British Crown—a blot upon the national escutcheon, all attempts to wipe out which, by the Colonial Legislatures, had been defeated by the British Government, and which, under the influence of our free institutions, was gradually but surely to be obliterated.

How terribly our fathers were mistaken, we do now know. The seven hundred thousand slaves have grown into four millions. To the six original slave States have been added nine others, and the original area has been more than trebled, the single State of Texas, alone, having more territory within its bounds than is included within the limits of the six original States in which the institution now exists. From hanging its head in penitent shame, the institution now rears its Gorgon front, and threatens to overwhelm all the Territories and all the States, or, like him of Gaza, in his wrath, pull down the pillars that support our Government.

The ultimate spread of African slavery over the fairest portion of this continent, if not over the whole of it, or its ultimate extinction, is a fact to be, which is as capable of demonstrative proof, by logical reasoning, as any contingency in the future can be.

It is reasonable to suppose that the framers of our National Constitution, when they authorized Congress to abolish the slave trade in 1808, understood that doing so would necessarily ultimately abolish slavery in the United States. Madison, and a large number of the members, were in favor of the immediate abolition of the slave trade. The statesmen of Virginia saw, even in that early day, that slave labor was impoverishing the soil and the State. Even then, the contrast between Virginia and Pennsylvania, in which free labor mostly prevailed, was most marked in favor of the Northern State. And not only patriotic, but interested motives, urged the ultimate extinction of slavery. It was with indignation and regret that Madison and the opponents of slavery, in order to keep within the Union two Southern States, submitted to the postponement of the prohibition of the African slave trade for twenty years. That father of the Constitution saw and said that the ultimate extinction of slavery would be thereby indefinitely postponed, if not entirely prevented.

The revival of the African slave trade is indispensable to the perpetuity of African slavery. Whoever walks the streets of this city, or enters its dwellings, knows that Africans are seldom seen. Unlike our Northern abolitionists, Southern abolitionists, perhaps under the influence of a more genial sun, are working out the emancipation of the race by practical amalgamation. Cut off the inky fountain from Africa, and but a few generations will pass, a few centuries roll away, before the traces of a negro population will be utterly obliterated.

Blushing cheeks will take the place of the unchanging ebony, and flaxen curls that of the compacted twist. Our law books are not devoid of cases where greedy heirs filch the estates of the master's sons from them, and pocket both gold and sons. As the bleaching processes proceed, less repugnant becomes practical amalgamation, and population, spreading over vast territories with virgin soils, will increase in the abject race with terrible rapidity. In the mean time, the fiery blood of the free Anglo-Saxon, mixing with the vast physical capacities of the negro and mulatto, will produce a more restless and bolder population, more impatient of restraint, less submissive of punishment.

The gradual advancement of the negro race in the scale of mental capacity, and its consequent aspirations, is inevitable; whilst the sure results of labor, even the coerced, will develop and harden the physical frame. On the other hand, amidst the rise of the negro race, the Anglo-Saxon master must certainly descend. The exercise of despotic power necessarily breeds a swarm of vices, which in time will inevitably obliterate all genuine manhood. As the virtues can only grow through the exercise of that love to the neighbor which is the all of Religion, the base of all true Democracy, and the only sure foundation of Government; so the opposite to universal fraternal love, the love of self and of dominion for self, which is the all of Hell, the base of aristocracy, and foundation of despotism, breed a swarm of lusts and passions that ultimately destroys all that is lovely in manhood. With accelerated speed down the succession of generations, from parent to child, all that makes man noble and Governments beneficent, descends and dwindles into nothingness. For the calm consciousness of virtuous power is substituted the arrogance of selfish force. For the mild but potent persuasions of fraternal love, is substituted the lash and the chain.

As this retrogression lapses down the vista of years, darkness and desolation gather over its path. The lights of love, beaming from free speech, radiating from the free press, and reflected and refracted from the free schools, free churches, and free institutions, are one by one put out, until one gloomy waste is spread below, one rayless heaven is stretched above; and the masters stalk through the paths of life, amid the darkened and cowed minds of their miserable slaves, feeling beneath their tread the suppressed rumblings of that volcanic soil, which is aggregating and intensifying its forces to engulf them in final ruin.

From these two causes—the ascent of the slave, the descent of the master—there is but one escape; and that is, the restoration to humanity of its God-given, heaven-descended rights. The final catastrophe may be indefinitely postponed by opening up the flood-gates of the African slave trade. Its desolating

end may be procrastinated and intensified by spreading the realm of its influence over added territory. But the irrepressible conflict between freedom and slavery, between right and wrong, love and self-love, equality and despotism, though repressed and baffled for the time, will, with inexorable purpose, marshal its rival battalions, and renew the combat. Ages of despotism and degradation may surge over the land. Back towards its pristine barbarism the human race may tread, or seem to tread, but, under the providence of God, sooner or later it will renew its ages of progression. It may be that another awful lesson is to be written on the page of history, of the immutability of God's law of right, ere the final reign of Christ's law of love shall bring men and nations into one universal fraternal concord.

At this moment, three mighty powers are in operation to spread human slavery over the Union—the President of the United States, the Democratic party, and the Supreme Court of the United States.

The impending crisis is upon us. The people are aroused; another stand is taken by the lovers of humanity, to stem the torrent of aggressive despotism. In terrible array, "fierce as ten furies, horrible as hell," the giant institution meditates by new deeds of emprise to acquire new realms of empire. The blow to humanity and freedom is shot forth from under the ample shield of our National Constitution. Its toleration of slavery in the slave States is converted into its sanction in the Territories. Its limitations and restrictions of despotic power are construed into sacred guaranties for its nurture and protection; and that charter of the rights of humanity, and the palladium of our liberties, is to become the potent engine of destruction to both. The President, who occupies the chair of Washington, directs the blow, and the known reverence of our people for law, is the vulnerable point at which the arrow is shot. The bended bow is in the hand of the Supreme Court, and the fatal dart is feathered from the wing of our own glorious bird of liberty, whose bosom it is intended to pierce.

The Father of men gave to them dominion "over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every thing that moveth upon the earth." But our President says, that our National Constitution gives to men dominion over men, not as men, but as property; that our Constitution converts the image and likeness of God into a chattel—sinks him to the same level as the ox and the horse. Because "guilty of a skin not colored like their own," our Supreme Court, through its Chief Justice, declares, that such men, though born under the shadow of Bunker Hill, of fathers who battled on its heights, "had no rights which the white man was bound to respect. And the Northern Democracy here declare, that if the Supreme Court decides that men are property under the Constitution, and as such their own-

ers are entitled to the protection guarantied to property by the Constitution—entitled to plant it in the free Territories, and hold it in the free States,—that they stand ready to sanction such despotism by a slave code, established by act of Congress; that they are prepared to follow the lead of these new constitutional lights, and strive, by another sanction, to crush out the free spirit of the people.

“What lower deep,
Wide opening, threatens to devour them?”

Man-worship is idolatrous. Its legitimate fruit is despotism, and despotic power appeals for its support to the very virtues it tramples under its iron heel. Loyalty is the term that absolute government gives to its supporters, whilst it enforces its tyrannies with the point of the bayonet. Peaceful, conservative, law-abiding, Union-saving citizens of Republics, are those called, who cringe the knee to Republican despotism. Rebels and traitors are those who lift their voices or their hands to stay the torrent of corruption, or stem the tide of iniquitous power. All distinction is lost between right and wrong in the blind subservency to power. Might makes right, and laws, iniquitous and infamous, are clothed with the attributes of justice and equity; and men, no longer guided by the dictates of the higher law, “vote the mantle into majesty,” and trample conscience, right, and humanity, under their feet. Such was not the doctrine of our fathers, nor the teachings of religion, nor the lesson of the law books.

Our fathers said, resist tyranny, watch your rulers, make them do right.*

The word of God says: “What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.”

Justinian says “that we should live honestly, should hurt nobody, and should render to every one his due;” and “these,” Charles O’Conor, in the Lemmon case, says, “are all the precepts of the moral law.” Blackstone says: “The law of nature, being coeval with mankind, and dictated by God himself, is of course superior in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the globe, in all countries, and at all times; no human laws are of any validity if contrary to this.” The absolute rights of individuals, which may be resolved into the right of personal security, the right of personal liberty, and the right to acquire and enjoy property, Chancellor Kent says, “have been justly considered, and frequently declared by the people of this country, to be natural, inherent, and unalienable.” We all remember what the hero of New Orleans, in his famous contest with the United States Bank, said his duty was in the discharge of his function as

President, in regard to a question not resting upon the immutable principles of the natural rights of man, but upon expediency only. Chief Justice Marshall said, it will not be denied that a “bold and daring usurpation might be resisted,” even after long acquiescence, and excepted from the force of precedent questions “in which the great principles of liberty” are concerned.

The idea that a decision of any Supreme Court, which tramples on the rights of humanity and the liberties of the people, should be tamely submitted to or acquiesced in, may be fit enough for a nation of slaves, but unworthy of a moment’s consideration from a *freeman*, with whom the memories of a glorious ancestry are yet fresh in his mind. The humblest citizen should not hesitate to set up his own opinion against all the weight of learning of all the judiciary on earth, when the question involves the loss of the absolute and natural rights which his own inbred and inherent consciousness tells him are his own indefeasible right.

Forty-six years ago, two human souls entered this world of God’s and man’s. Under the same roof, on the self-same day, each first drew the vital breath of heaven; each bore the same name; over the same floor tottled in infancy, gambolled on the same lawn, and, until tyrant custom taught them the difference, were equals and fellows. Forty-six years have lapsed into eternity, freighted with their varied history of human hopes and toils, rewards and punishments. Beneath the same sun, on the same atom of God’s universe, under the shield of one common Government, one stands to-day girded by all the blessings of liberty, the humble and unworthy advocate of the rights of humanity on this floor; the other drags out to-day, on some Southern cotton or rice field, the homeless, hopeless, toilsome life which is the fate of the slave.

God of justice and of mercy! where are thy loving, thy redeeming, thy regenerating influences, for those who would open the flood-gates of the African slave trade, to deluge the land? who, under the shadow of our national ensign, would spread the baleful curse of African slavery over every foot of free soil? Shades of Washington and Madison, of Marshall and of Story, of Jefferson and of Clay! watch ye now over the destinies of your long-loved country? From the senate of the skies, descend once more to rescue the work of your hands from the threatened desecration; let not unborn millions, teeming through the mighty valleys and majestic prairies of this Western World, execrate your memories, as the men who made and rolled this car of Juggernaut over the crushed hopes of millions of slaves! But as the waves of population from the Pacific and Atlantic coasts crest the summits of the Rocky Mountains, let them bear with them, as the priceless argosies of a nation’s wealth, free schools, free churches, free speech, free labor, and free men, to make free soil to bud and blossom like the rose. And

* Washington, in his Farewell Address, in enumerating the great interests which the people were to prize and protect, says, as first in order: “Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.”

then they who look back upon the scenes of to-day will see that, amidst these seeming discords,

"God plans; man works; God oversees the work.
The stately frame of the harmonic world
Rises even now, though men perceive it not.

From all the quarries of the earth are hewn
The stones of that vast fabric. Based on all,
The columned isles and vaulted continents,
Poised in mid air, a golden dome of light,
Thy crystal firmament, O Liberty!
Like a new heaven, shall span the coming age;
And all the nations underneath thy arch
Worship in peace together."

PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN OF 1860.

REPUBLICAN EXECUTIVE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE.

HON. PRESTON KING, N. Y., *Chairman.*

" J. W. GRIMES, IOWA.

" L. F. S. FOSTER, CONN.

On the part of the Senate.

" E. B. WASHBURNE, ILLINOIS.

HON. JOHN COVODE, PENN., *Treasurer.*

" E. G. SPAULDING, N. Y.

" J. B. ALLEY, MASS.

" DAVID KILGORE, INDIANA.

" J. L. N. STRATTON, N. J.

On the part of the House of Reps.

The Committee are prepared to furnish the following speeches:

EIGHT PAGES.

Hon. W. H. Seward, N. Y.: State of the Country.

" W. H. Seward, N. Y.: Rochester Speech.

" G. A. Grow, Penn.: Free Homes for Free Men.

" James Harlan, Iowa: Shall the Territories be Africanized?

" John Hickman, Penn.: Who have Violated Compromises.

" B. F. Wade, Ohio: Invasion of Harper's Ferry.

" G. W. Scranton and J. H. Campbell, Penn.: The Speakership.

" F. P. Blair, Mo., Address at Cincinnati: Colonization and Commerce.

" Orris S. Ferry, Conn.

" Abraham Lincoln, Ill.: The Demands of the South—The Republican Party Vindicated.

" William Windom, Minn.: The Homestead Bill—Its Friends and its Foes.

" Owen Lovejoy, Illinois: The Fanaticism of the Democratic Party.

Lands for the Landless—A Tract.

The Poor Whites of the South—A Tract.

SIXTEEN PAGES.

Hon. Lyman Trumbull, Ill.: Seizure of the Arsenals at Harper's Ferry, Va. and Liberty, Mo., and in Vindication of the Republican Party.

" B. F. Wade, Ohio: Property in the Territories.

" C. H. Van Wyck, N. Y.: True Democracy—History Vindicated.

And all the leading Republican speeches will be published as delivered.

During the Presidential Campaign, Speeches and Documents will be supplied at the following reduced prices:

Eight pages, per hundred, copies free of postage,	-	-	-	-	\$0.50
Sixteen " " " " " "	-	-	-	-	1.00
Twenty-four " " " " " "	-	-	-	-	1.50

Address either of the above Committee.

GEORGE HARRINGTON, *Secretary.*

Hon. H. Wilson, Mass.: Territorial Slave Code.

" John P. Hale, N. H.

" J. J. Perry, Me.: "Posting the Books between the North and the South."

" J. R. Doolittle, Wis.: The Calhoun Revolution—Its Basis and its Progress.

" C. M. Clay, Ky., in the city of New York.

Carl Schurz, Wis.: Douglas and Popular Sovereignty.

TWENTY-FOUR PAGES.

Hon. Jacob Collamer, Vermont.

THIRTY-TWO PAGES.

Hon. Thomas Corwin, of Ohio.

GERMAN.

EIGHT PAGES.

Hon. G. A. Grow, Penn.: Free Homes for Free Men.

" James Harlan, Iowa: Shall the Territories be Africanized?

" John Hickman, Penn.: Who Have Violated Compromises.

Carl Schurz, Wis.: Douglas and Popular Sovereignty.

SIXTEEN PAGES.

Hon. Lyman Trumbull, Ill.: Seizure of the Arsenals at Harper's Ferry, Va. and Liberty, Mo., and in Vindication of the Republican Party.

" W. H. Seward, N. Y.: The State of the Country.

Lands for the Landless—A Tract.